

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 030065
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S/S:MR.SEBASTIAN

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R 100056Z FEB 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: LA, MILI, APER

SUBJECT:LETTER OF APPRECIATION SENT TO COMMANDANT OF
MARINES

1. FOR EMBASSY'S INFORMATION ONLY, FOLLOWING LETTER OF
APPRECIATION FOR SERVICES OF MARINE SECURITY GUARD DETACH-
MENT AT VIENTIANE WAS SENT FEBRUARY 8 FROM UNDER SECRETARY
FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS TO GENERAL WILSON, COMMANDANT OF THE
MARINES:

BEGIN QUOTE:

DEAR GENERAL WILSON:

THE LAO GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY ASKED US TO REDUCE THE
STAFF OF OUR EMBASSY AT VIENTIANE, AND IN DOING SO TO WITH-
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DRAW THE SIX MEMBERS OF THE MARINE SECURITY GUARD DETACH-
MENT AT THAT EMBASSY. THEIR DEPARTURE WILL BE A SAD
OCCASION FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE THAT WILL
REMAIN, NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THE LOSS OF SECURITY THAT THESE
MEN PROVIDED, BUT BECAUSE OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE PART THE
MARINES PLAYED IN ALL THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EMBASSY.

THE ROLE OF THE MARINES AT AMERICAN EMBASSIES AROUND THE WORLD IS A LONG AND DISTINGUISHED ONE AND NO PLACE MORE SO THAN AT VIENTIANE. SINCE THE PATHET LAO TOOK CONTROL OF THAT COUNTRY IN MAY 1975, OUR EMBASSY HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO MANY PRESSURES AND DIFFICULTIES, AND THE MARINES HAVE PLAYED THEIR PART AND MORE IN ALLOWING IT TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION. AT ONE POINT, FOR EXAMPLE, TWO MARINES REMAINED FOR A WEEK IN LOCKED BUILDINGS IN THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPOUND WHILE THE REST OF THE COMPOUND WAS OCCUPIED BY DEMONSTRATORS.

THROUGHOUT THIS ENTIRE TWENTY-ONE MONTH PERIOD THE BEHAVIOR AND DEVOTION TO DUTY OF THE MARINE SECURITY GUARD DETACHMENT AT VIENTIANE WAS EXEMPLARY. I WISH YOU WOULD CONVEY TO THOSE MARINES WHO SERVED IN VIENTIANE MY APPRECIATION, AND THE APPRECIATION OF ALL THEIR FORMER COLLEAGUES OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE, FOR A FINE JOB WELL DONE. THEY WILL BE MISSED.

SINCERELY,

PHILIP C. HABIB. END QUOTE.

2. FOR CHARGE: YOU MAY WISH TO SHOW LETTER TO REMAINING MEMBERS OF MARINE SECURITY GUARD DETACHMENT BEFORE THEY DEPART POST.
VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 10-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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